

John Murray

From: Jean Fleming
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2004 4:26 PM
To: John Murray
Subject: Budget Requests and Questions

Re: COA Van Enterprise Fund; 6/30/03 fund balance was \$8,427. Projected balance for 6/30/04 will be in the negative range, as I now expect to be short approximately \$6000 - \$6500 in revenues including fund balance to cover FY'04 expenses. To be able to continue van service through the end of June '04, I will need to ask for an appropriation article on the April Town Meeting warrant to make an appropriation from free cash or to be able to utilize the Audubon Hill Gift Fund monies. This situation has arisen because the revenues from the LRTA contract (\$35,500 in FY'04) and van fares (approx. \$5000) only cover about 2/3 or less of the annual budget for the COA van; the rest has come from the fund balance which is now depleted.

Re: the sheet that says that the "COA needs a \$10K subsidy", this refers to the request that \$10,000 be appropriated for the operation of the COA Van in FY'05. It now seems clear that there will actually be a deficit of at least \$25,000, \$34,000 if the '05 COA Enterprise Fund budget request of \$74,411 is fully funded. So, if the service is to continue through next year, as we would hope that it would, then we will need to request additional money from taxation, or utilize the Audubon Hill gift fund monies.

Re: Guidelines for determining "Needs" in the COA budget

The COA requested '05 budget of \$131,944 is to cover the salaries of COA staff (88% of the total budget), office, program and postage supplies (5.5%) and other services (6.5%) necessary to enable us to provide adequate and high quality programs and services to the growing population of Acton's citizens 60 years of age and over. Our greatest need is always staffing hours, as we are only as good as the people who work here and can only do as much as we have hours to plan, implement and supervise programs. We are looked to as the primary information resource center for Acton's senior citizens and are a readily utilized resource for younger citizens and families as well who are looking for resource information about financial and fuel assistance. The only full time staff member is the director; the other three office staff work between 19 and 28 hours a week. A Capital request, which I realize will probably remain unmet, is the increase in hours of our Program Coordinator, from 19 - 26 per week, as the amount and scope of Senior Center programs has grown markedly over the past several years, while her hours have remained the same. Our "supplies" budget has essentially remained the same for the past several years, and our "postage" budget, used for all the newsletter mailings to approx. 1700 senior households in addition to regular postage expenses, was reduced slightly this year. We consider our newsletter to be one of the most important services we supply to seniors; the "printing and copying" and "postage" line items comprise 9% of our overall budget.

The services of our 150 COA volunteers and the generous support of the Friends of the Council On Aging have made it possible for us to keep this budget as tight as it is. We are proud of what we offer to Acton's senior citizens and are asking, through this budget request, to be able to continue to provide these high quality services.

Jean Fleming, COA Director

1/9/2004